Can Planners Improve Performance at our Local Schools?

2015 Nevada Chapter APA Conference
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Introductions

- Stephanie Garcia-Vause, AICP, Henderson, NV
- Candace Stowell, AICP, Urban Planning Consultant
- Andrew Powell, Henderson, NV
Southern Nevada Context

- Highly concentrated employment
- Population
  - Projected 2.8M by 2030
- Median age = 35.8
- Families with children ≈ 60%

- Median income: $52,873

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Clark County/LV MSA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Other Race</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: City of Henderson Community Development & Services Department and U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2009-2013
Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan, Page 40 southernnevadastrong.org/
What is Southern Nevada Strong??

Southern Nevada Strong was a collaborative regional planning effort, funded by a $3.5 million dollar grant from HUD. The grant provided the resources to conduct in-depth research and community engagement efforts to analyze the issues facing our community and propose collaborative solutions.

The result is Southern Nevada’s 1st Federally-Recognized Regional Plan.
PUBLIC INPUT
Generate and collect ideas

TASK GROUPS
- Develop strategies
- Comprised of subject matter experts
- Continued research and strategy development for the Regional Plan

CONSORTIUM COMMITTEE
- Business and Community Leaders
- Elected officials
- Leaders of each Task Group

SNRPC BOARD
Review and approve final Regional Plan

WORKING GROUP
Facilitates communication throughout the process

REGIONAL PLAN CREATED
When & How

Conducted research and community engagement, identified issues and developed a Regional Plan that was adopted in January 2015.
Our Challenges: Southern Nevada & Education

• NV is 50 out of 50 in quality of education
• Clark County & Nevada’s HS grad rates are much lower
  – HS students not graduating on time = 40% NV vs. 19% US
• Students score low in reading and math
  – % of 4th graders not proficient in reading = 73% in NV; 66% US
  – % of 8th graders not proficient in math = 72% in NV vs. 66% US
• College completion rates are low
  – For every 100 HS freshmen, 11 graduate from college (US = 19)
  – Low educational attainment of adult population
    – Population 25+ that has a HS diploma or higher = 83%
    – Population 25+ has a BA or higher = 22.1%
    – Teens not in school and not working = 13% in NV, 8% in US
    – Children living in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma = 23% in Nevada, 15% in US

City of Henderson Community Development & Services Department and U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2009-2013
Southern Nevada Strong Regional Plan, southernnevadastrong.org/
NCHEMS Information System, compiled from the Common Core of Data, National Center for Education Statistics
Our challenges: Southern Nevada & Education (Cont.)

- 5th largest school district in the US after NYC, LA, Chicago and Miami
- Overcrowding
  - 319,669 students in November 2014*; more than 1,000 additional students from the September count.
- Lack of Funding to Build New Schools
- Economic Volatility and Over-Reliance on Gaming, Tourism & Construction
- Low tax rate

Community Outreach Results
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Satisfaction (Y), Low Importance (X)</th>
<th>High Satisfaction (Y), High Importance (X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M. The availability of places to get physical exercise</td>
<td>J. The availability of a variety of housing options to buy or rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Access to parks, trails, and open space</td>
<td>A. Access to healthy food options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Short commute times to the places you need or want to go</td>
<td>H. The overall physical appearance of the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. The availability of places to safely walk or bike</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Satisfaction (Y), Low Importance (X)</th>
<th>Low Satisfaction (Y), High Importance (X)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D. The ability to walk to places you need or want to go</td>
<td>L. The availability of a variety of affordable housing options to buy or rent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The availability of public transportation alternatives to driving a car</td>
<td>E. The quality of local public schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I. The availability of good paying jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. The ability to get to the places you need or want to go without traffic and congestion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Addressing Our Challenges in the Regional Plan

- Surprisingly little planning framework or guidance to address education; little research available
- Had to figure out a way for a place-based process to support a regional priority:
  - Held a regional capacity building event with community leaders (education and planning primarily)
  - Commissioned a white paper: “Supporting the Education Imperative: The Role of Community Development”
- Shared results and recommendations with stakeholders and integrated findings into Regional Plan
Supporting the Education Imperative: The Role of Community Development
Questions for Today

• What drives achievement inside and outside the schoolhouse?

• How can community developers, non-profit leaders, and planners help educators improve college and career-readiness?
What drives achievement?
Effect of Socioeconomic Status on the Cognitive Ability of Young Children

Income level seems to have a very small effect on the mental function of children under age one.

Source: Fryer and Levitt (2013); authors’ calculations.

Note: Bars show regression estimates of the effect of socioeconomic status on standardized mental function composite score in the ECLS, controlling for race, age, and home environment. Hollow bars are statistically insignificant at the 5 percent level.
Number of Words Spoken per Hour to Children Under Age 3, by Family Status

Source: Hart and Risley, University of Kansas
Enrichment Expenditures on Children

High-income families spend about seven times more on their children than low-income families.

Source: Duncan and Murnane (2011).
Note: For a full description of enrichment expenditures, see the technical appendix.
The achievement gap between high- and low-income students is at an all-time high.

Source: Reardon (2011).
Note: The figure shows best-fit estimate from the twelve available nationally representative studies that include family income and standardized test scores.
What’s been tried, measured, and appears to work?
In the Schoolhouse
Effect Size of Selected K12 Interventions
Around the Schoolhouse

Effect Size of Selected Interventions

-0.10
-0.00
0.00
0.10
0.20
0.30
0.40
0.50

0.00
0.10
0.20
0.30
0.40
0.50
0.60

Standard Deviations

High Quality PreK
Nurse Family Partnership
Even Start
Early Head Start
1 on 1 reading tutors-peers
1 on 1 reading tutors-adults
ELL Tutoring
Afterschool Programs [M]
$1,000 Earned Income
Paying Students to Read [R]
Tax Credit
HCZ Community Bundle
Relocate Students/Families
Around the Schoolhouse

Impact of Low-Cost FAFSA Assistance

Source: Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy
How does achievement support communities?
Education and Economic Growth: The Circle of Prosperity

A talented, flexible workforce and an appealing environment...

Diverse, value-adding industries that provide well paying jobs...

Generate revenues for excellent schools, quality public services, and public facilities...
# School Quality and Home Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable tested:</th>
<th>Impact on Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Quality</td>
<td>1-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(elementary test score proficiency per 10% increase)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square Footage</td>
<td>4% - 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(per 100 additional square feet)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Bathrooms</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 bedroom units only)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Takeaways

1. Improved educational outcomes improves community development outcomes, and vice versa.

2. The achievement gap is established primarily outside of the K12 schools—in families and communities.

3. To date, K12 schools have done little to appreciably increase or decrease the gap.

4. Opportunities to decrease the gap exist both inside and around the K12 schoolhouse.
Questions educators, community developers, planners, and elected leaders might ask to assess conditions around the schoolhouse.
Questions to Consider

What is the broad inventory of learning spaces (e.g., schools, preK centers, libraries, museums, playgrounds) across the metropolitan area?

How is the inventory distributed relative to young learners--today and 10 years from now?

What is the physical condition of the inventory?
Questions to Consider

Where is birth-to-five programming offered across the region? How do participation rates vary among eligible learners? Is the nature of programming different across geography? Is it evidence-based?
Regionally, how much is spent on afterschool programming? How many different agencies deliver it? Does it appear enrollees are making more progress in school than non-enrollees? Who is served and who is missed?
Questions to Consider

What is the spatial relationship between high schools and postsecondary institutions? How does that affect collaboration and opportunities for dual enrollment and other methods of accelerated learning?
Recap: Planning and policy approaches

- Improved coordination
- Better data to connect demographics and education outcomes
- Access (affordable housing, transit, jobs)
- Quality communities: quality schools
Reactions from attendees/stakeholders

- Overall, high satisfaction with the event and presentation
- Recognition for integrating education, economic development and scenario planning
- Mixed reaction regarding what to do with information:
  - Relief/excitement from teachers, community leaders (especially from communities of color)
  - Disagreements over problem definition
  - Revealed prejudices about why educational attainment is low
Regional Plan Recommendations & Strategies
Improve Economic Competitiveness & Education
Invest in Complete Communities
Increase Transportation Choice
Regional Plan Strategies

- Increase mixed income housing, providing affordable housing in areas with great schools
- Improve proximity and safety: infill, mixed use, TOD, design for multiple modes
  - Develop school siting and rehab prioritization criteria
- Prioritize the school environment for children, encouraging development that better supports existing schools
  - Free preschools and all-day kindergarten
  - Support events and educational programs that address disparities/improve social equity
  - Partner with Safe Routes to Schools
  - Promote the integration of schools, parks and community services into neighborhoods
  - Review the impacts of restrictive zoning on the educational system
Why Don’t We Address Public Schools?

• Community Preference Surveys from Realtors and APA
• APA & AICP Codes
• APA Policy Guides
Jobs, Crime, Education and Health Care
Top Priorities

Top Priorities for State Government

Here are some issues INSERT STATE will be facing over the next few years. For each one please indicate how much of a priority it should be for your state to address: Should it be an extremely high priority, a high priority, a middle priority, a low priority, or an extremely low priority for your state government?
Most Important in Deciding Where to Live

Most Important Factors in Deciding Where to Live:

- Privacy from neighbors: 46% Very Important, 40% Somewhat Important, 86% Total
- Sidewalks and places to take walks: 37% Very Important, 43% Somewhat Important, 80% Total
- High-quality public schools: 45% Very Important, 29% Somewhat Important, 74% Total
- Being within an easy walk of other places and things in the community: 28% Very Important, 40% Somewhat Important, 69% Total
- Easy access to the highway: 23% Very Important, 44% Somewhat Important, 68% Total
- Living in a community with people at all stages of life: 23% Very Important, 43% Somewhat Important, 66% Total
- An established neighborhood with older homes and mature trees: 21% Very Important, 44% Somewhat Important, 65% Total
- Being within a short commute to work: 28% Very Important, 37% Somewhat Important, 65% Total
- Public transportation within walking distance of your home: 25% Very Important, 34% Somewhat Important, 59% Total
- Living in a place that’s away from it all: 21% Very Important, 34% Somewhat Important, 55% Total

Candace H. Stowell, AICP Urban Planning
Consultant
**QUESTION**

Which of the following do you want local planners to spend their time on?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5: Priorities for Local Planning Efforts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH PRIORITIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting Neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM PRIORITIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable Energy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revitalizing Neighborhoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW PRIORITIES</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Bus Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Train Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bikeways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Trails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprawl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**QUESTION**  
*In an era of shrinking local government resources, for each of the following services please tell us if it is a high, medium, or low priority with regards to funding.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH PRIORITIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Creation</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Water</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIUM PRIORITIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy Utilities</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Utilities</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewage</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Air</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Preparedness</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOW PRIORITIES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APA’s Codes and Policy Guides?

- APA Code
- AICP Code of Ethics
- APA Policy Guides
  - Smart Growth
  - Redevelopment
  - Housing

Candace H. Stowell, AICP
Urban Planning Consultant
Why Should Planners Address Public Schools?

- To acknowledge that many issues outside of the classroom affect student learning
- To adopt goals and actions that support education improvements
- To improve coordination between local planning and school districts
- To acknowledge that great communities need great schools

Candace H. Stowell, AICP
Urban Planning Consultant
Perspective as Former Carson City School Board Member

• Appointed to fill term from June 2013 to December 2014
• Learned about the funding challenges and complicated funding formulas for Nevada School Districts
• Transition to Star Ranking System
• Critical role of School District in Economic Development and Recruitment Efforts
Carson City School District

• New Five Year Strategic Plan
• Race to Top Grant in 2012
• Strong Community Partnerships
• Cohesive School Board & Stability with Superintendent Richard Stokes
• Importance of marketing & communication strategies

Candace H. Stowell, AICP Urban Planning Consultant
Proposed APA Interest Group on Public Schools

Mission Statement: The mission of the public schools interest group is to create stronger linkages between the planning profession and public school districts in order to support and strengthen public schools and in so doing, create stronger neighborhoods and stronger cities.

The interest group will explore and promote best practices to support public schools in order to improve education outcomes for students and improve community revitalization efforts. Areas of focus will include:

• Expanding planners’ knowledge of the external factors that affect student education outcomes
• Creating Model Education Elements in the Master Plan
• Highlighting best practices in school facility planning, including school siting and school closures
• Highlighting the connection between public education and the economic vitality of neighborhoods and communities
• Creating strategies to reduce economic and racial segregation in public schools and surrounding neighborhoods
• Highlighting the Community Schools Model
• Exploring different models of collaboration between local planning departments and public school districts.
• Exploring different models of public school governance and school choice.

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